



Congresswoman Stephanie Murphy
Floor Statement as Prepared for Delivery
Murphy Amendment #14 (Deepfakes)

*H.R. 3494, Damon Paul Nelson and Matthew Young Pollard Intelligence Authorization Act for
Fiscal Year 2020
July 16, 2019*

Thank you Madam Chair.

My amendment, which I am co-leading with Congresswoman Yvette Clarke of New York, involves the looming threat to American security and American democracy from the use of deepfake technology by our nation's adversaries.

As policymakers, we must understand this challenge and put in place a whole-of-government strategy to address it in a way that protects our interests and is consistent with our values. The U.S. intelligence community has an important role to play in this effort.

The House Intelligence Committee, led by Chairman Schiff, recently held an illuminating—and alarming—hearing on deepfakes.

As the witnesses at that hearing testified, technology now enables anyone with a computer, internet access, and technical skills to create fabricated, and relatively convincing, video and audio recordings that depict individuals doing or saying things they did not do or say.

The technology behind deepfakes is rapidly evolving. Soon, individuals will be able to create highly-realistic—and difficult to debunk—video and audio content. At a time when Americans are already being inundated—especially online—by a flood of false or misleading information, deepfake technology has the potential to make it even harder for the American public to trust what it sees and hears.

It's easy to imagine the different ways in which deepfake technology could be exploited by America's foes.

Imagine a Russian intelligence service creating a video purporting to show an American presidential candidate accepting a bribe, or an audio recording purporting to reveal an American secretary of state saying something inflammatory about an ally.

Or imagine a Chinese-produced video that falsely depicts the commander of a U.S. military unit committing a war crime.

Such efforts, if not quickly exposed as false by the United States, could cause havoc.

In today's world, perhaps the biggest national security threat we face is not the risk of direct military conflict between the United States and Russia, China, Iran, or another adversary.

Instead, the threat lurks in that grey space short of kinetic action.

It is illustrated by Russian efforts to interfere in the 2016 presidential election, most notably in my home state of Florida.

It is the threat from authoritarian governments using new technologies to spread disinformation, sow discord, create divisions, and cause the American people to lose faith in our democratic form of government.

To address this threat, our amendment requires the DNI to prepare a report for Congress on how foreign countries are using, or could use, deepfake technology to harm the United States, and to explain how the intelligence community is working to develop appropriate counter-measures.

This report will help us to understand the problem and to combat it more effectively. We must get this right—because the stakes couldn't be higher.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment and I reserve the balance of my time.